Rome Feb.y 22d 1869

My dear Marcia

Yours had a good deal that was very painfull about yourself, that you were suffering, but now I hope to hear that you are better & that the winter is almost over, which will be a relief to you

you know that I have got my dear Twins with me, & you can imagine how pleasant it is for me. Eleanor has great quickness of talent and memory – extraordinary observation – she has grown strong & well – Arthur has a fine genius for Art & is a good steady boy with heaps of sound sense, but 'tis singular they do not in the least resemble each other – We make a nice trio, very jolly

I am glad to tell you that the persecution I have been suffering for 5 months for D.r Small has at last come to and for Lord Clarendon has made known to him that his charges against me are all without foundation. – The Doctor wrote 5 large sheets of paper on both sides against my Consulate, my two Secretaries & myself & sent it to the Foreign Office, where it was carefully read & examined & pronounced groundless – 'tis odd how that I should have such enemies, for scarce a day passes without my doing good to some one – This Doctor

wanted to be Consul & thought to strike me down by scandal — I had changed him for another Doctor for his medicines alarmed me, & tis well I did so, in my attack of inflamation the slightest thing would have carried me off — I am well now tho' still weak a little in my limbs, but we have such a lovely spring that I may hope to be quite restored

I find that it is just possible that the malignant Dr Snell may print & go before Parliament with his charges against me, but he is sure to fail as I have many friends to support me besides the Prime Minister himself & the charges have been well sifted & found false as hoods

Caroline has not yet come to Rome with her greek fire but I am expecting her & shall have great pleasure in her visit for 'tis years since I saw her

I often think it will be possible that I may visit the dear old England again & when — sometimes I dread a long journey, yet some day I may find the mind in strength of body & purse — I will be pleased to hear that at last I have paid up the Marcian water 50 shares, £1.000, got together by pinching, starving, old cloathes & turning pennies so that I am sure of £150 a year, which whatever befalls me will be a comfort at the last — I confess it has been a very hard task — In October the work will be ready & even now the water is selling — this is a mountain lake of very fine water so that it will supply up to top stories of all Rome, at present the Romans draw up the water in copper buckets — the next thing I want to set up the baths & warehouses like London

(I am seeking a £5 note to send you in haloes) Your loving brother Joe